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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05 PM-03 INR-05 SP-02

L-01 PRS-01 USIA-01 TRSE-00 /039 W

P 061845Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7830
CIA
DIA

003892 ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release (☐) Excise (☐) Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: (☐) In Part (☒) In Full

(☐) Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to ☐

Date 7808 Declassify on Reason

[REDACTED] SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES

LIMDIS

7. AMBASSADOR HILL THEN ASKED IF THE MINISTER WOULD MIND TELLING HIM SOMETHING ABOUT HIS FAMILY'S ORIGIN. THE GENERAL ANSWERED THAT HIS FATHER'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY CAME FROM SPAIN (CASTILE) FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO. THIS PARTICULAR ANCESTOR WAS A SOLDIER WHO ENTERED ARGENTINA FROM PERU VIA BOLIVIA AND ESTABLISHED A FAMILY WHICH SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCES OF TUCUMAN, CATAMARCA, AND SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO. THE FAMILY ON HIS MOTHER'S SIDE CAME FROM TURIN, ITALY. THEY ARRIVED IN ARGENTINA IN 1880 WITH ONLY THE CLOTHES ON THEIR BACKS AND SETTLED IN MENDOZA. THROUGH HARD WORK AND DEDICATION THIS FAMILY HAS BEEN ABLE TO PRODUCE A LONG LINE OF PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE (DOCTORS, LAWYERS, PROFESSORS) TO INCLUDE A GENERAL (HIMSELF). FOLLOWING UP IN A PERSONAL VEIN, THE AMBASSADOR ASKED IF HE HAD TRAVELED IN THE U.S. GENERAL DIAZ BESSONE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVEL ABROAD SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND CHOSE TO GO TO THE STAFF COLLEGE IN BELGIUM FOR TWO YEARS INSTEAD OF THE U.S. HE EMPHASIZED HIS DESIRE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE U.S., BUT REALISTICALLY CONCLUDED THAT HIS CHANCES TO TRAVEL THERE ARE REMOTE AT THIS TIME. (IT WAS OBVIOUS THROUGHOUT THE MEETING THAT THE GENERAL DID NOT UNDERSTAND OR SPEAK ENGLISH. REPORTEDLY, HE IS FLUENT IN FRENCH.)

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8. THEN THE GENERAL NOTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD BROUGHT TO THE MEETING A COPY OF PROJECTS NACIONAL, WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED UNDER HIS SUPERVISION AND UNDER THE GENERAL SPONSORSHIP OF THE [REDACTED]

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ARGENTINE FOUNDATION FOR THE YEAR 2000. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROJECTS NACIONAL HAD BEEN PUT TOGETHER IN 1971 AND 1972 DURING THE GOVERNMENT OF GENERAL LANUSSE WHEN IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THE PERONISTS WOULD SOON RETURN TO POWER. (BY THE TONE OF HIS VOICE, HE OBVIOUSLY DISAGREED WITH LANUSSE ON THIS POINT.) HE EXPLAINED THAT CONDITIONS NOW ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT AND THE PROJECTO NACIONAL IS NO LONGER VALID ("NO SIRVE"), ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE BASIC CONCEPTS MAY STILL BE ACCURATE. THE NEW PLANNING MINISTRY WILL START FROM SCRATCH IN ITS PLANNING FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC.

9. WHILE AMBASSADOR, THE DATT AND THE MINISTER OF PLANNING WERE TALKING IN ONE ROOM, UNDERSECRETARY DURET HAD TAKEN DCM AND POL COUNSELOR TO HIS OWN OFFICE FOR EQUALLY LENGTHY MASSAGE TREATMENT, WHICH INCLUDED BRINGING IN A BATTERY OF ASSISTANTS FOR INTRODUCTIONS AND EXPLANATION OF THEIR MISSIONS AND FUNCTIONS. DURET'S APPROACH WAS DESIGNED TO COMPLEMENT MINISTER'S AND THE "DIVIDE AND CONQUER" TACTIC WAS OBVIOUSLY PLANNED. HE, TOO, DELIVERED LONG ANTI-SOVIET MONOLOGUE. ARGENTINA WAS NOW ONE OF THE PRIMARY TARGETS OF WORLD COMMUNISM, HE SAID, AND MUST DEFEND ITSELF BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY -- AND WOULD DO SO NO MATTER WHAT REACTION

OF WORLD PUBLIC OPINION MIGHT BE. ARGENTINA, HE WENT ON, WAS PURELY WESTERN NATION AND IN HIS OPINION HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THIRD WORLD AND EVEN LESS WITH COMMUNIST BLOC. DURET INDICATED DIAZ BESSONE HAD EVEN SUGGESTED ARGENTINA STOP TRADING WITH COMMUNISTS COUNTRIES. AS DURET PHRASED IT, "WE WANT NOTHING FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN."

AS DID GENERAL DIAZ BESSONE HIMSELF, DURET TENDED TO DOWNPLAY POSSIBILITY OF FRICTION BETWEEN TEAM AT MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MARTINEZ DE HOZ'S TEAM AT ECONOMY MINISTRY, AND HE DISMISSED PROJECTO NACIONAL PUBLISHED TWO YEARS AGO OF WHICH DIAZ BESSONE WAS CO-AUTHOR AS "OBSOLETE" AND AS "ONLY AN ACADEMIC EXERCISE." AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE DID SAY IT MIGHT BE USED AS FRAMEWORK UPON WHICH TO BUILD FUTURE NATIONAL PROJECT. (NOTE: DIAZ BESSONE'S PROJECTO NACIONAL PUBLISHED TWO YEARS AGO -- COPIES OF WHICH ARE BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT -- WAS HEAVILY STATIST AND NATIONALIST IN TONE AND CONTENT, LAYING EMPHASIS ON STATE ENTERPRISES AND DISPLAYING SUSPICION OF FOREIGN CAPITAL). ON PLANNING, DURET EMPHASIZED NEED FOR LONG RANGE NATIONAL PROJECT

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TO DETERMINE PRIORITIES, GOALS AND DEFINITION OF WHAT KIND OF COUNTRY
THEY WANTED ARGENTINA TO BE. MINISTRY, HE SAID, WOULD ALSO HAVE
[REDACTED]

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RESPONSIBILITY FOR COORDINATING SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES OF OTHER
MINISTRIES TO MAKE CERTAIN THEY WERE IN CONCERT WITH LONG-RANGE
GOALS ESTABLISHED BY NATIONAL PROJECT.

10. AMBASSADOR HILL THANKED THE GENERAL FOR THE FRANK AND THOROUGH
EXPLANATION OF HIS VIEW OF THE WORLD AND OF THE PROBLEMS FACED BY
ARGENTINA. HE REITERATED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS ALWAYS PLACED
GREAT IMPORTANCE ON ITS RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA AND WILL
CONTINUE TO DO SO. THE GENERAL RESPONDED BY THANKING THE
AMBASSADOR FOR HIS VISIT AND REITERATED THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT
THING THAT THE U.S. CAN DO FOR ARGENTINA IS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS
TAKING PLACE. HE ASSURED THE AMBASSADOR THAT ARGENTINA WAS SEEKING
COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION WITH THE U.S. AND WOULD GO TO
GREAT LENGTHS TO AVOID CONFRONTATION. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME
ARGENTINES WOULD LIKE TO DESTROY THE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.
AND BRING ABOUT A CONFRONTATION. IN FACT, HE ADDED, SOME ARGENTINE
MARXISTS HAVE BEEN LYING TO THE FRASER COMMITTEE. SOMEHOW THE
TRUTH MUST BE TOLD TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ABOUT THE MURDEROUS
AND BARBAROUS ACTS COMMITTED BY THE TERRORISTS FROM THE SENSELESS
KILLING OF GENERAL ARAMBURU THROUGH THE COUNTLESS MURDERS OF
MILITARY, POLICE, BUSINESSMEN AND OTHER CITIZENS OF ARGENTINA,
TO INCLUDE INNOCENT CHILDREN. THEN THE GENERAL DEMURRED SOMEWHAT
AND REMINDED THE AMBASSADOR "I AM NOT IN CHARGE; I AM ONLY ONE
OF MANY WHO PARTICIPATE AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO SOLVE OUR
PROBLEMS". HE THEN EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION AS TO THE USEFULNESS
OF THE MEETING AND SUGGESTED THAT COMMUNICATIONS BE KEPT OPEN
BETWEEN THE U.S. EMBASSY AND THE PLANNING MINISTRY SINCE IT WAS
VERY IMPORTANT FOR HIM TO KNOW WHAT THE U.S. WAS CONCERNED ABOUT.
AS THE MEETING CLOSED HE TOLD THE AMBASSADOR VERY CONFIDENTIALLY
THAT IT WAS HIS PERSONAL CONVICTION (AND HE STRESSED THAT HE WAS
NOT SPEAKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT) THAT ARGENTINA MUST WIN ITS
STRUGGLE WITH THE MARXISTS. IN THIS "WAR"
THEY MUST RESORT TO EXTREME MEASURES AT TIMES, ALTHOUGH THE
EMPHASIS IS ALWAYS ON MODERATION. IF OTHER COUNTRIES CONDEMN
ARGENTINA IN THE PROCESS IT IS REGRETTABLE, BUT SO BE IT. IF THE
GOVERNMENT MUST CONFRONT THE CHURCH IT IS UNFORTUNATE, BUT THIS TOO
WILL BE DONE. IF THE ONLY OTHER ALTERNATIVE IS DEFEAT.

COMMENT:

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11. THE GENERAL WENT TO UNUSUAL LENGTHS FOR AN ARGENTINE ARMY
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OFFICER - TO IMPRESS US. HE IS DYNAMIC, HE IS SEEN AS A LEADER AND PATRIOT BY HIS PEERS, AND THE INTENSITY OF HIS FEELINGS IS OBVIOUS. JUST HOW CLEAR HIS POSITION IS REMAINS TO BE SEEN. FOUR YEARS AGO HE WAS THE PRIME MOVER BEHIND THE STUDY WHICH PRODUCED THE EXTREME NATIONALIST/STATIST PUBLICATION "THE NATIONAL PROJECT" WHICH HE NOW DOWNPLAYS. WE ARE LOOKING INTO HIS CURRENT RELATIONS WITH A BELGIAN PRIEST WHO WAS HIS PRINCIPAL ADVISOR ON THAT STUDY AND WITH WHOM HE CONTINUES TO CONSULT. DIAZ BESSONE IS CLEARLY A MAN TO WATCH. IF HIS AMBITION DOES NOT COMPEL HIM TO FORCE HIS HAND, HE IS A LOGICAL SUCCESSOR TO PRESIDENT VIDELA.
HILL
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